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From: SECSTATE WASHDC
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Pass Line: PAO PLEASE PASS TO CAO AND FULBRIGHT COMMISSIONS, WHERE APPLICABLE.
Subject: FY 2012 TEACHING EXCELLENCE AND ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

1. Summary: This cable describes the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program (TEA) and outlines nomination procedures for international teachers. Addressee posts and commissions are invited to recruit and nominate secondary school teachers of English, English as a Foreign Language, social studies, math, and science in your countries for programs in either the spring or fall of 2013 pending the availability of funds. The program will provide a six-week professional development program at a U.S. university combining academic and instructional technology seminars with a practicum in a U.S. secondary school.

The Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) of ECA's Office of Global Educational Programs will provide funding and overall policy guidance for this program. Following an open competition announced in the Federal Register through a Request for Grant Proposals for FY 2012, the Bureau has selected the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) to implement the program in consultation with ECA/A/S/X and the participating posts and commissions.

IMPORTANT NOTE: We do not have an FY 2012 budget level. Although paragraph 3 of this message specifies the number of candidates you are invited to nominate, we are not able to guarantee funding for any specific number of participants at this time.

New in FY 2012: Participation in the TEA program has been open to teachers who are able to demonstrate English language proficiency by attaining a minimum score of 450 on the TOEFL or equivalent exam. In FY 2012 posts and commissions may nominate participants with a TOEFL score of 425 to 450 to participate in a pilot cohort that will feature a greater concentration on English language learning. The cohort will be planned for and incorporated into the fall, 2013 program. Posts and commissions may include nominations for this cohort within the number of nominations specified in paragraph 3.

ECA/A/S/X will provide (by transfers to commissions or miscellaneous obligations to posts) funds to cover testing fees for the Institutional TOEFL, paper-based TOEFL, or IELTS, and to assist international teachers with expenses related to the application process and a pre-departure orientation. These costs include the costs of travel to an interview/English testing location, and the costs of travel to visa interviews and pre-departure orientations (see paragraph 7 below).

ECA/A/S/X is unable to provide administrative support to IREX field offices, other NGO field offices, or Fulbright commissions to cover staff salaries or other administrative costs associated with recruitment, nomination, or orientation for this program.

For this reason, posts and commissions that elect to recruit and nominate teachers for this program should be prepared to make their own arrangements for the recruitment and screening of applicants and for the administration of a half-day pre-departure orientation session for departing participants.

To make the administrative effort at posts and commissions as manageable and as convenient as possible, IREX and ECA/A/S/X have prepared recruitment materials including application forms, a sample program announcement, pre-departure orientation materials, and a slide show for use at recruitment sessions or other venues. IREX will send these materials for your review shortly after you receive this message. Paragraphs #4 and #11 of this message provide additional details about these responsibilities.

Deadlines: By December 1, 2011, please indicate by email to Lisa Weilminster, Program Officer, IREX (lweilminster@irex.org) if you intend to recruit and nominate teachers this year. A post's or commission's decision not to participate in the FY 2012 program will not affect eligibility to participate in the FY 2013 program. The deadline for receipt of nominations by IREX in Washington, D.C. is June 15, 2012. IREX will conduct a technical review of the applications in consultation with ECA/A/S/X, confirm budget levels with ECA/A/S/X, and inform posts and commissions of the status of their nominees by September 15, 2012.

End summary.

2. Program Overview:

Pending availability of FY 2012 resources, ECA/A/S/X is planning to bring approximately 178 international teachers of English, English as a Foreign Language (EFL), social studies, math or science to the United States for a total of two six-week professional development programs (one program in the spring of 2013, the other in the fall of 2013). Teachers will be placed in cohorts of about 22 teachers at eight U.S. universities that will be selected through a competitive process. The program will consist of academic seminars focusing on teaching methodologies, curriculum development, lesson planning, teaching strategies, and instructional technology training. Intensive English language instruction will be offered to teachers who need additional practice. The program will also include a practicum at a U.S. secondary school where participants work closely with U.S. teachers and teach and present to U.S. students. Cultural enrichment, mentoring, and support will be provided to participants throughout the program.

New for FY 2012: ECA/A/S/X will pilot a cohort, in the Fall of 2013, for highly qualified teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL), math, science or social studies, who are in need of additional oral and written English training. TOEFL scores or equivalent should range from 425-450.

After returning home, teachers will be eligible to request funds from ECA/A/S/X for essential teaching materials, follow-on training for other teachers, collaborative projects between participating American schools and their home schools, and other activities that build on the exchange experience. IREX will distribute application materials and

disburse funds directly to the winning applicants once post concurs.

3. Participating Countries and Number of Positions: ECA/A/S/X invites each post or commission to submit the following number of nominations. As previously noted, the number of grants cannot be determined until FY 2012 resources are appropriated and allocated.

AF: Cote D'Ivoire (3), Ghana (4), Mali (3), Rwanda (3), South Africa (7)

EAP: Cambodia (5), Thailand (6)

EUR: Armenia (3), Azerbaijan (3), Bulgaria (3), Estonia (2), Georgia (3), Latvia (2), Lithuania (2), Poland (4), Romania (4), Ukraine (7), Russia (9)

NEA: Egypt (6), Jordan (5), Morocco (5), Oman (3)

SCA: Bangladesh (11), India (11), Kazakhstan (5), Kyrgyzstan (3), Nepal (4), Tajikistan (3), Turkmenistan (3)

WHA: Argentina (4), Bolivia (3), Chile (3), Colombia (5), Costa Rica (2), Dominican Republic (3), Ecuador (4), El Salvador (3), Guatemala (3), Haiti (3), Honduras (3), Nicaragua (3), Panama (2), Peru (3), Venezuela (4)

4. Additional Applications: We also invite you to submit additional nominations for 2-6 additional candidates with the understanding that funds may not be available to support their participation.

5. Post/Commission Responsibilities for Recruitment and Nomination: If posts or commissions elect to participate in this program, ECA/A/S/X requests that you conduct program outreach and recruitment, distribute application materials, review applications, and arrange interview panels and English language testing (see paragraph 7 below) for a limited number of teacher applicants. To keep the process manageable and to reduce the administrative burden of the recruitment and nomination process, we suggest interviewing no more than twice the number of candidates you hope to nominate.

IREX will contact posts and commissions via e-mail in the coming weeks to send recruitment materials including application forms, a sample program announcement, and program presentation slides, which can be used at recruitment sessions to advertise the program. IREX will also provide advice, based on previous experience, for screening applications efficiently and conducting interviews.

We request that posts and commissions, if at all possible, conduct interview panels with more than one interviewer, and that interviewers provide nomination materials for each teacher.

6. Eligibility and Selection Criteria: Applicants must be secondary-level, full-time teachers with a Bachelor's degree or the equivalent, and have five or more years of classroom experience in English as a Foreign Language (EFL), social studies, math or science. Please note that this is a program for practicing teachers. Ministry of Education officials, full-time principals or educational administrators, full-time teacher trainers, university faculty, private English Language tutors, and teachers from schools primarily serving expatriates are not eligible. Applicants must reside in the country of citizenship at the time of application.

Applicants with recent participation in similar programs of six months or more in the U.S. or other Western countries should be given lower priority. Teachers working in under-resourced communities should be given higher priority. Selection criteria should also include consideration of gender, geographic and other diversity factors.

7. English Language Testing: All candidates nominated for the program must take the TOEFL or an equivalent test. In order of preference, ECA/A/S/X recommends that posts and commissions identify a provider of the institutional TOEFL. If the institutional or paper-based TOEFL are not available, ECA/A/S/X recommends the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Another option is the Internet-based TOEFL (iBT). As noted in paragraph 2 above, posts and commissions may choose to nominate strong candidates with slightly lower

scores, understanding that there will be only one or two cohorts, in the Fall of 2013, of approximately 20 participants, who will spend relatively more time in English language courses.

Posts and commissions will be responsible for making all testing arrangements including dates, locations and times. Posts or commissions may request funding from ECA/A/S/X to cover costs of the institutional TOEFL or IELTS (see paragraph 9 below). IREX can provide posts or commissions with ETS vouchers for the iBT. Posts/commissions must let IREX know the number of vouchers requested no later than March 1, 2012. Test results should be included with nomination materials to IREX no later than June 15, 2012. Testing should be administered to no more than twice the number of nominees requested (see paragraph 3 above).

Teachers with TOEFL scores of 450 or higher on the written Test, or equivalent on other tests, will be eligible for the regular program. Posts and commissions will be responsible for making all testing arrangements, including dates, locations and times.

8. Dependents: Dependents are not permitted to accompany participants in this six-week program.

9. Funding Requests for Institutional TOEFL or IELTS testing fees, and International Teacher Travel to interviews and Pre-Departure Orientations: ECA/A/S/X will provide funds via a Miscellaneous Obligation document (MO) to posts or via the Payment Management System (PMS) to commissions to cover the costs that international teachers incur in the process of applying for this program. We are prepared to cover the costs of the Institutional TOEFL or IELTS testing fees and up to two trips if necessary: one for the travel of candidates to the interview/English testing location plus per diem, and one for the travel of participants to the visa interview/ pre-departure orientation plus per diem costs. Please contact Patricia Mosley, ECA/A/S/X, at Mosleypj@state.gov (cc: Michael Kuban for EUR, Maxine Lunn for EAP, NEA and WHA regions, or Elizabeth Devlin-Foltz for AF and SCA regions) if you would like to request these funds.

10. Sending applications to IREX: Please prepare a list, in priority order, of the teachers whom you are nominating and send the list together with their original application forms, as well as nomination materials and English test results to Lisa Weilminster (lweilminster@irex.org) by June 15, 2012. Please see the number of nominees requested by country under number 3 above. You may also nominate 2-6 alternates.

Incomplete applications will not be considered. Please instruct applicants to answer all questions as fully as possible, and inform them that scores, institutional support forms, recommendations and other required documents must be included in the application package. Requests to send missing items later must be accompanied by a reasonable explanation specifying the date by which the missing item can be expected. (We understand that there are occasional technical difficulties with tests and that school directors may not complete the institutional support form promptly, but participants will not receive final acceptance without complete documentation).

11. Confirmation of Participation: IREX and ECA/A/S/X will conduct a technical review, and will confirm participation in the priority order of the posts and commissions unless a candidate is technically ineligible. By September 15, 2012, we will provide posts and commissions with a list of participants who will be offered fellowships and ask posts/commissions to concur with selections and to confirm that the applicants' circumstances and eligibility have not changed (i.e., still employed as a teacher, not accepted into any similar programs by State or other international organizations, no major health or family concerns).

IREX will also send to posts/commissions for distribution award letters, grant documents with terms and conditions, DS-2019 forms, medical forms, pre-program survey forms, welcome packages for teachers from U.S. host universities, and international airline tickets.

12. Commission/Post Responsibilities for Pre-departure orientation: ECA/A/S/X requests that posts or commissions conduct a half-day pre-departure orientation; this orientation may coincide with interviews for visas where possible. IREX will send to each post and commission a PowerPoint presentation for the pre-departure orientation as well as a pre-departure guidebook for use in preparing for the session.

13. Travel: As noted above, IREX will provide all teachers with an international airline ticket. IREX will also reimburse them for round-trip travel expenses between their home city and the point of departure for, and arrival

from, the US. (They will receive full reimbursement amount for this travel from IREX at the conclusion of their program.)

14. Contact information at ECA/A/S/X: For any questions regarding the program, please contact senior program officer Michael Kuban at KubanMM@state.gov or 202 632-6346 (EUR), program officer Maxine Lunn at LunnMP@state.gov or 202 632-6340 (EAP, NEA and WHA regions), or Elizabeth Devlin-Foltz at Devlin-FoltzEA@state.gov or 202-632-6334 (AF and SCA regions).

15. Contact information at IREX: please contact Lisa Weilminster (lweilminster@irex.org), or 202-628-8188 ext. 183; fax 202 628 8189. The IREX website is www.irex.org

16. We thank posts and commissions for their support and interest in teacher exchange programs.

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